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A Case for The Alberta School Trustee

H. E. SPENCER, Edgerton

*Compiled at the request of the Alberta School Trustees'
Association*

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A CASE FOR THE ALBERTA SCHOOL TRUSTEE**H. E. SPENCER, Edgerton**

The problem of education in the Province of Alberta is of the greatest importance and one the public should fully understand. It is with this object in view the Alberta School Trustees' Association is publishing the following information.

Much has already been written from the teachers' point of view. This review is from that of the trustees, who, while equally interested in education, have at the same time a financial responsibility in administering the school business of the Province. When increases in salary schedules are asked for, it is not a question merely of giving. Many trustee bodies would gladly accede to the request. It is a question of how to procure the money.

Alberta, being largely agricultural, the welfare of that industry directly affects the taxing ability of the people to pay school expenses. This is the case whether they are farming or giving a service to the farmers in town or village. The agricultural problem will therefore be discussed at some length.

THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT AND THE SCHOOL TRUSTEES

Two clauses in the A.S.T.A. Constitution read:

- (1) To consider all matters relating to education and the betterment of school administration.
- (2) To provide a medium of communicating to the Minister of Education the views of the people of the Province on educational questions, especially the view of the School Trustees.

The Alberta School Trustees are the direct representatives of the taxpayers in respect to educational facilities.

The responsibility of education lies with the Department of Education and the School Trustees. The former by statutory provision regulates:

- (1) The courses of study.
- (2) Says what text books are to be used.
- (3) Certificates teachers.
- (4) Inspects work done.
- (5) Makes regulations regarding school houses and grounds.
- (6) Fixes the minimum salary of teachers.

The duty of the Trustees is to administer The School Act.

- (1) By employing teachers.
- (2) Keeping school and grounds equipped and in good order.
- (3) Arranging for all children to get an education.
- (4) Drawing up budgets covering their activities.
- (5) Calling on the taxing authority, the municipality, for what money they need.

Most of the money is raised by direct taxation on lands or homes of the Province; only a portion by grant.

In Scotland, England, New Zealand and Australia, education is administered by the Department of Education and primary schools are under the supervision of Educational Boards administering large areas. The Central Government pays over half the cost of education. It may be of interest to state that according to the Bureau of Statistics, two-thirds of the teachers in Canada are women. This tends to a continual change in the teaching staff, as the average length of teaching in Canada is only seven years.

The cost of education, although reasonably met in some areas, is a financial problem in others, especially if crops are poor or one of nature's hazards has occurred

or prices for farm produce are low. To quote from a statement of the Government in "The Case for Alberta" page 265, "Because a Province is too poor or an area within a Province is too depressed to furnish an adequate programme of education is no fault of the children who are found there. Poorly equipped schools, underpaid and dissatisfied teachers cannot produce an environment for our children which is conducive to mental health and a progressive society. This is one reason for claiming that education is a national problem and should command a national interest." In the early days of the Province, the school grant was \$1.00 per day per rural room for 210 days, except with respect to specially qualified teachers when it was increased to \$1.10 a day. For some years prior to 1931, basic grants were paid at the rate of 90c per day for one room schools up to 200 days. In 1932, the term was reduced to 180 days. Payment at the above rate per day was continued until 1936 when the rate was reduced to 75c per day for a one room school and for not more than 200 days. This reduction in grants was keenly felt by trustee bodies who had then to obtain more money by direct taxation.

Provincial assistance to elementary education declined during the depression years. However, special grants were inaugurated in 1926 known as Special Assessment Grants and somewhat relieved the situation. The following Government statement on page 266 of "The Case for Alberta" is worth recording. Referring to the decline in expenditure on Education, they say: "But to a greater extent the decline has been due to the fact that the Boards of Trustees of many School Districts have been obliged, by the ratepayers in their districts, to reduce expenses to a minimum in order to lighten the burden of taxation so difficult to meet when the prices of farm products were so low."

It is estimated that the Provincial Grant in rural districts is about 25%, but many are receiving much less. The following table for the Provincial grants furnished in the different Provinces shows the position of Alberta.

Prince Edward Island.....	57.4%	
British Columbia.....	28%	
Saskatchewan.....	20.5%	
Nova Scotia.....	17.5%	and County Grant of 13.5
New Brunswick.....	17.5%	and County Grant of 5.5
Alberta.....	15.8%	
Manitoba.....	15%	
Ontario.....	11.5%	and County Grant of 5.5
Quebec.....	5.5%	

These figures were compiled in 1939 but are similar today.

The Median School Grant in the United States is 29.65%.

The arrears of Alberta salaries reached a total of \$304,000.00 by December 31st, 1936, which indicated the inability of the School districts or municipalities to collect the normal amount of school taxes. Since that date, agricultural conditions have not improved in the aggregate. It must be remembered that while teachers' salaries are the principal items of educational expenditure, the trustees have other expenditures for which they must budget. The debenture debt, for instance in 1940 was \$7,301,294.00. They have also to arrange for caretaking, fuel, equipment and replacement of school buildings.

The above facts would seem to warrant the trustees claiming increased government grants rather than be compelled to increase direct taxation to obtain the necessary money.

RELATION OF FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO EDUCATION

To quote from the recommendation of the Sirois Commission on Dominion-Provincial Relations, Book 2, p. 50: "Training for adolescents and adults is given today on a scale hardly anticipated in 1867, and the development of the radio and of organized research has brought new techniques into educational activities.

Thus, education, like the social services, has developed aspects which have led to action by the Dominion and which has been the ground for many representations of Provincial Governments. There are some Dominion functions, such as military training, and radio programmes which indirectly invite excursions into the educational field. . . . Many representations have been made to us that financial help should be extended by the Dominion to the Provinces for various purposes, such as scholarships, technical training, grants to be used for general educational purposes provided that the Provinces did not reduce their own expenses on education." (This includes some 30 associations, as set out in the above mentioned report.)

In "The Case for Alberta" the Provincial Government submitted the following statement. "Canada is interested in establishing and improving Democracy, and certainly in the opinion of the average citizen, education is the greatest of all agencies for accomplishing this purpose."

Put in a few words the following is the general stand taken by the Provincial Government in their further submissions:

- (1) It is essential that equal educational facilities be given in all Provinces. A low standard in any one is detrimental to the other eight.
- (2) The National Treasury of England is responsible for 55% of the cost of local education.
- (3) The liability of the Province for education is entirely out of line with the narrow basis of taxation assigned to it.
- (4) It must be apparent that a nation cannot compete successfully with other nations if the responsibility of educational training is left to the care of a Province or a State with limited financial resources.
(The following items 5, 6, 7 and 8 appear to be proofs that the Dominion Government recognizes some responsibility.)
- (5) In 1913 a Royal Commission reported in favor of Dominion Grants for technical education.
- (6) In 1919 a Dominion Act provided \$10,000,000 to be spent over ten years for technical education.
- (7) In 1931 a measure for providing vocational education was passed authorizing payment of \$750,000 annually for a period of fifteen years.
- (8) In 1937, \$1,000,000 was voted "to provide for development of training projects for unemployed young people."
- (9) Agriculture is not, as some people seem to think, a matter of mere brawn. Crop rotation, seed control, seed selection and animal husbandry are all subjects of the schools of rural areas.
- (10) "If all children in Alberta are to receive reasonable uniform educational opportunities, the Province will have to give increasing aid. This it cannot do without being relieved of other obligations. It is proposed therefore that the Dominion Government embark on an extended programme on aid to education."

SOME FARMING PROBLEMS AFFECTING TAXATION

One of the outstanding economic characteristics of the Prairie Provinces is the relatively great variation in the net income of the population. This is due in the main to the almost complete dominance of agriculture, especially grain growing, as a source from which such incomes are derived. This marked variation in incomes

arises not only from the violent price fluctuations and restricted markets, but also from the erratic crop yields which are the natural result of the uncertain climatic conditions. In addition to which there may be infestations of weeds or some insect pest. These may combine to produce a high variability of crop yields and quality. Also, it must be remembered that like other Western Provinces, Alberta is handicapped in that she must sell her farm products in unstable and uncontrolled markets, and buy in a protected market. To add to her difficulties she is without a port.

The following table from page 112 "The Case for Alberta" shows the Alberta wheat yield, price and value from 1920 to 1936. This reveals a loss on production of wheat since 1930 and it is well known that the following five years were in a similar category.

Alberta Wheat yield, price and value per acre

Year	Yield	Price	Value
1920	20.50	1.52	31.16
1921	10.35	.77	7.97
1922	11.25	.77	8.66
1923	28.00	.65	18.20
1924	11.00	1.20	13.20
1925	18.00	1.09	19.62
1926	18.50	1.05	19.43
1927	27.40	.97	26.17
1928	25.50	.77	19.64
1929	12.00	1.14	13.68
1930	18.60	.39	7.25
1931	17.70	.36	6.37
1932	20.00	.32	6.40
1933	13.00	.45	5.85
1934	15.00	.58	8.70
1935	13.60	.61	8.30
1936	9.10	.87	7.92

It is not surprising, therefore, that the Alberta Debt Adjustment Board estimated the total agricultural debt for Alberta at the end of 1936 at \$395,000,000.00. Details of this are shown on page 118 in "The Case for Alberta" as follows:

"It is important to note, however, the estimate as at the end of 1936 of the total indebtedness of agricultural Alberta, furnished by the Alberta Debt Adjustment Board. This Board, while agreeing that it is impossible to obtain accurate and definite figures covering the total indebtedness of agricultural Alberta, estimates conservatively that the amount would be approximately \$395,000,000, detailed as follows:

1. Members of the Mortgage Loans Association.....	\$ 45,000,000
2. Canadian Farm Loan Board.....	6,500,000
3. Soldier Settlement Board.....	8,000,000
4. School Lands Branch of the Department of Lands and Mines, under School Lands Contracts.....	4,500,000
5. Organized vendors of land, such as— The Canadian Pacific Railway Company, Hudson's Bay Company, Lethbridge Northern Land Irrigation District, Canadian Land and Irrigation Company, British Dominion Lands Settlement Corporation.....	21,000,000
6. Private Parties, Mortgages and Vendors of Land.....	65,000,000
7. Banks.....	35,000,000
8. Implement Dealers (Members of the Implement Dealers' Association).....	50,000,000

9. Retail Merchants.....	40,000,000
10. Oil Companies.....	15,000,000
11. Finance Corporations.....	15,000,000
12. Dominion and Provincial Governments, and Municipalities for Seed Grain and Relief.....	15,000,000
13. Taxing Authorities, in respect of tax arrears.....	20,000,000
14. Rural Credit Societies and Co-operative Marketing Associa- tions.....	5,000,000
15. Sundry Creditors (embracing professional men and so forth and including items not listed above).....	50,000,000
Total.....	<u>\$ 395,000,000</u>

AVERAGE COST OF PRODUCING WHEAT

According to the Division of Field Husbandry (Dominion Experimental Farm), the average cost of producing wheat after fallow on 8 experimental farms has been \$17.40 per acre. With the average of 27.4 bushels per acre this is a cost of 64c per bushel.

Prof. E. C. Hope of the University of Saskatchewan estimates that if interest charges on debts were included, the cost would average 72c per bushel for the half-section farm.

From a chart on page 27 of the same Bulletin (No. 159) we find the only bumper crops are in the years 1915, 1916 and 1928. It might be mentioned that in 1916 the crop was severely affected by frost. When we realize that 90% of the cultivated areas in the three Prairie Provinces are given over to growing grain, it is understandable why the farmers' income is so variable and the difficulty he has from time to time to pay his taxes.

According to the Dominion Bureau of Agricultural Statistics, January-March, 1942, p. 25, we find the following prices quoted for Spring wheat on the farm:

1937.....	\$1.02
1938.....	.58
1939.....	.52
1940.....	.49
1941.....	.47

These figures show a continued drop since 1937. The last four years the price is below the cost of production. The better price of the 1937 crop was due to severe drought conditions. Therefore the aggregate income of the farmer that year was quite small on that account.

On page 90 figures for farm wages show:

	By Day	By Month
In 1940.....	\$1.71	\$36.42
In 1941.....	1.87	38.98
In 1942.....	2.18	48.86

In both cases there is a steady increase.

On page 29 the values of Alberta Crops are listed as:

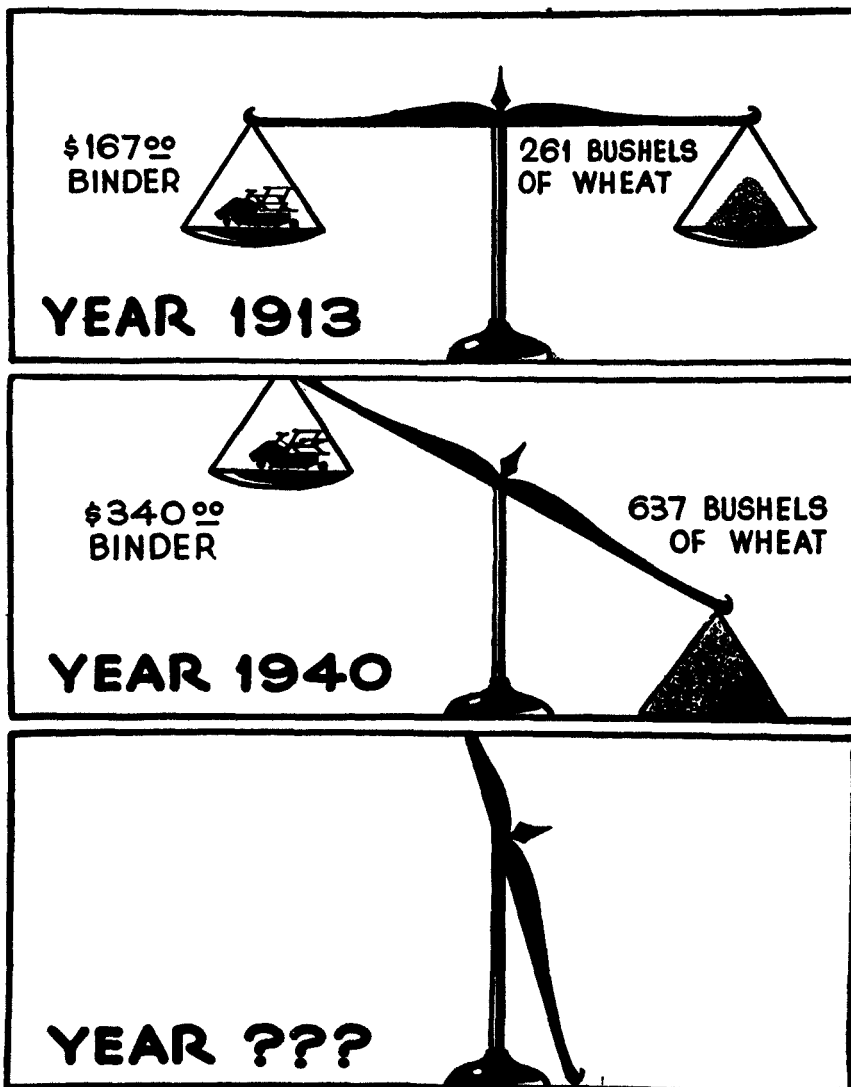
In 1939.....	\$126,947,000.00
In 1940.....	136,572,000.00
In 1941.....	93,830,000.00

It is needless to draw attention to the loss in 1941.

When the Turgeon Commission was sitting, the Alberta Government presented a brief showing the average debt in Alberta as around \$25.00 for every acre seeded in the Province.

COST OF FARM IMPLEMENTS

One of the great capital costs of the farmer is that of implements. According to a House of Commons Investigation in 1937, and the special committee of the Saskatchewan Legislature in 1939, the following costs were shown. The cost of a binder in 1913 was \$167.00 which was equivalent to 261 bushels of wheat. By 1940, the price of machinery had so risen and the price of wheat so fallen that we find a binder cost \$340.00 which would require the selling of 637 bushels of wheat. This may well be borne in mind, and it must also be realized, that the same trend runs through all the farm machinery.



FARMERS' SHARE IN NATIONAL INCOME

SOURCE OF INFORMATION: The figures regarding all phases of the National Income are from "National Income", a study prepared for the Royal Commission on Dominion-Relations by Messrs. MacGregor, Rutherford, Britnell and Deutsch and a supplementary volume bringing the figures up to date by the staff of the Commission. The figures relating to manufacturing are based on the Census of Industry figures supplied by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics. The figures for the number of farms are from The Canada Year Book.

The farmers having to contend with the above handicaps, one might well ask, what share of the National Income does the farmer receive? The farm population is about one-third that of Canada. Their share of the National Income for the years 1926 to 1929 averaged \$791.00. From 1930 to 1940 the average cash income per farm family dropped to \$329.00 per year and the average share of the National Income dropped to 9.4%. In other words, the cash income decreased by 58%. If these figures are compared with the manufacturing industry, we find the annual average wages per worker from 1926 to 1929 to be \$1,017.00 and for the next nine years they averaged \$902.00, a drop of 12% contrasted with 53% in the case of the farmer. In the same period the salaries paid by industry were \$1,894.00 and \$1,724.00 respectively, a drop of only 10%, showing the deplorable financial condition of agriculture. These figures are quoted to stress the fact that the capacity of the farmer to pay school taxes is limited in proportion to the income received.

The following chart speaks for itself:

FARMERS LOSE OUT



CHART No. 3

This chart shows the variation in the average incomes of the farmer and the wage earner in manufacturing. It should be remembered that over this period there was very little variation in the volume of production in agriculture but a very great variation in the returns to the farmer.

The salaries of the teachers bore a general relation to those of industry until 1930, when those of the latter improved; but those of the teachers returned to 1918 figures, while the farmers' income kept well below both.

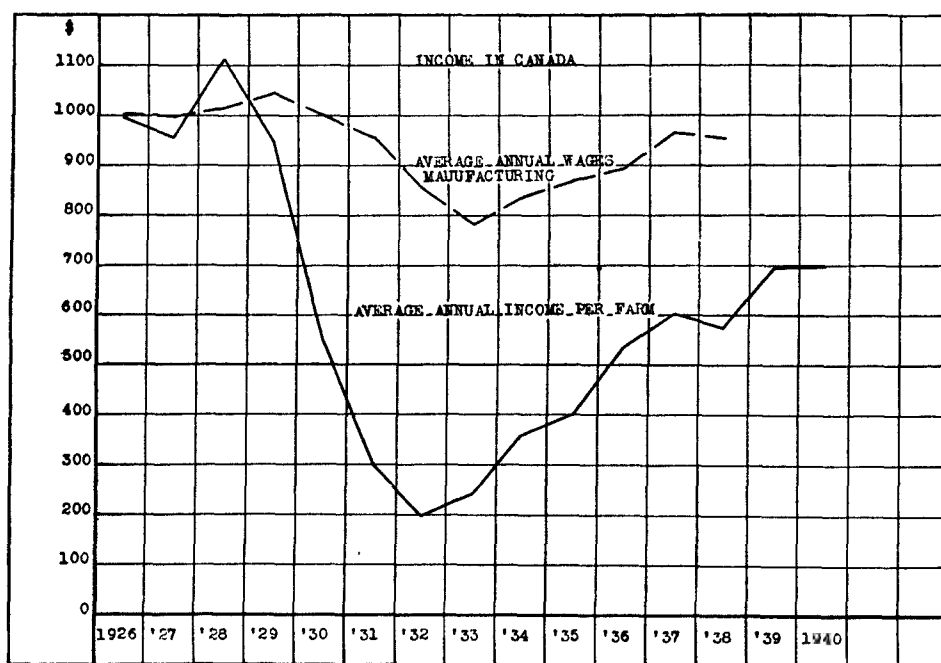
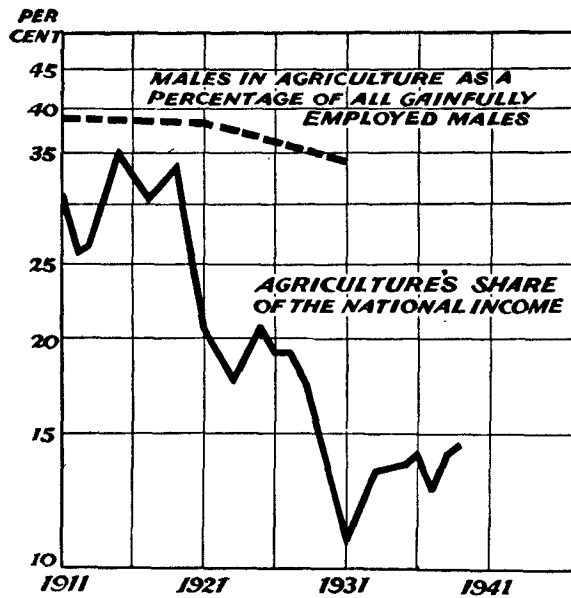


CHART No. 4

Chart No. 4 gives a striking picture of agriculture's small share in the national income and also its irregularity.

**AGRICULTURAL WORKERS
AND THEIR SHARE OF THE
NATIONAL INCOME OF
CANADA 1911-39.**



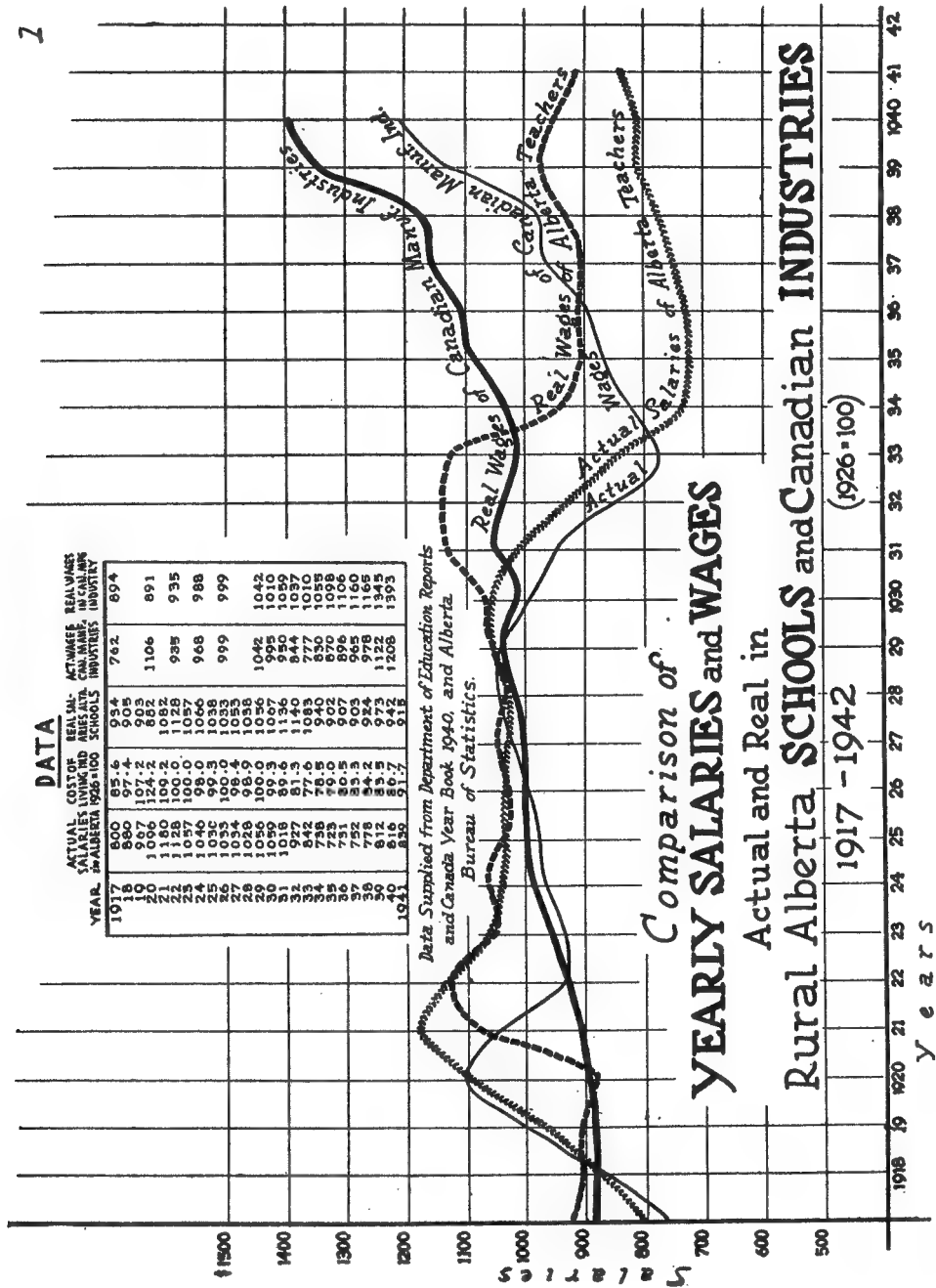
ALBERTA TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION CHARTS

Some quite interesting charts have been issued by the Alberta Teachers' Association on which a few comments might well be made. As these charts are presented largely to bolster the argument for higher salaries, (which at present must result from direct taxation) it will be quite in order to refer to the part the farmer's income, etc., should play in the relation thereto, particularly as the major basis of all taxation in Alberta is the farm.

T. D. Baker, Chairman of the Salary Committee of Central Executive of the A.T.A. in a report dated August 10th, 1941, said: "The salaries of teachers were inseparately bound to farm income and price levels, since the farm taxpayer bears the largest share of the expense of education in Alberta."

CHART No. 5

Chart No. 5 makes a comparison of salaries and wages, taking only those of teachers compared with those of industry.



The preceding chart is obviously most incomplete without comparison with the income of the farmer—the principal source. Also it must be borne in mind that the average farm investment is \$7,000.00 on which no interest has been calculated. Would it not have been more illustrative of comparative incomes if the incomes of this larger percentage of the population as it is indicated in Chart 6 below had been given?

It will be noticed that the drop in farm income occurred a full year prior to the drop in wages of those in industry.

CHART No. 6

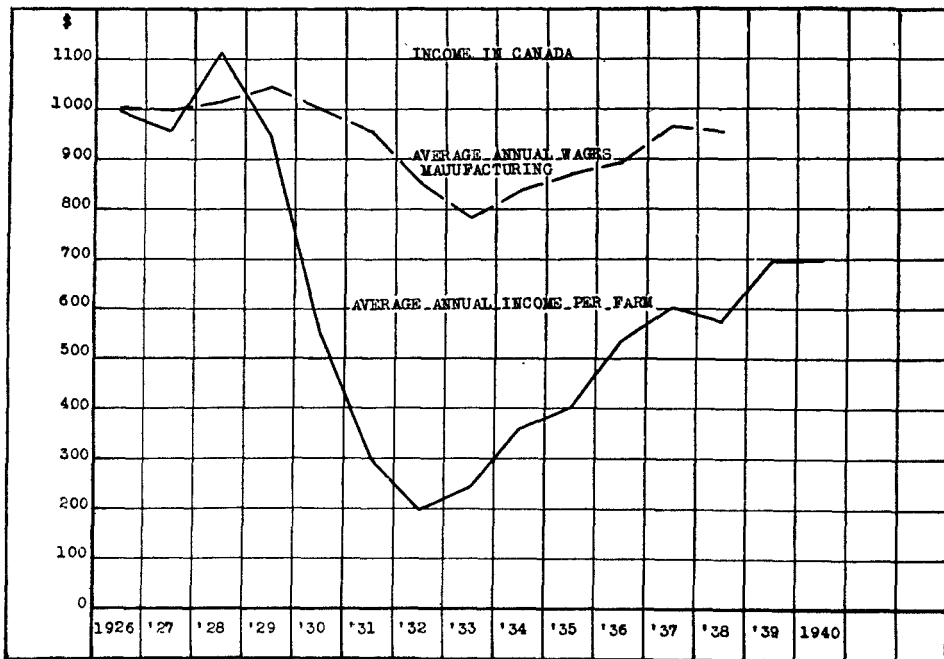


CHART No. 7

Chart No. 7, gives gross production and gross cost of education. It shows the cost of education steadily increased from 1935 to 1939. However, it does not show another important fact and that is, that the farmers' income dropped in Canada 53% from 1930 to 1940, the farmer getting only 9.4% of the National income. Alberta's figures vary but little from the National figures.

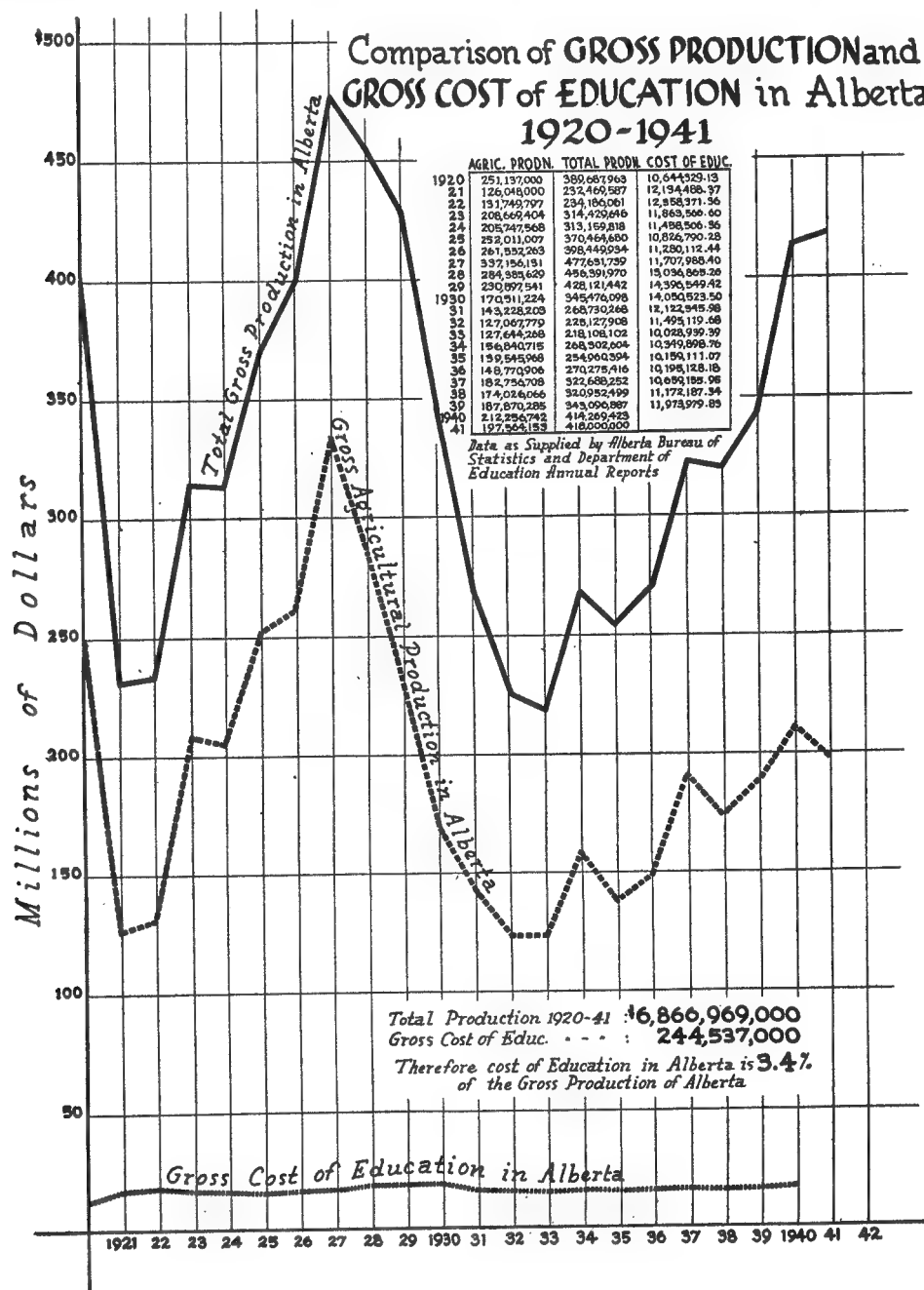


CHART No. 8

Chart No. 8 shows average teachers' salaries paid in different Alberta Schools. The rural school figures can be seen to be reflected directly from the agricultural depression in Alberta. Towns and villages in turn followed closely showing their dependence on the welfare of agriculture.

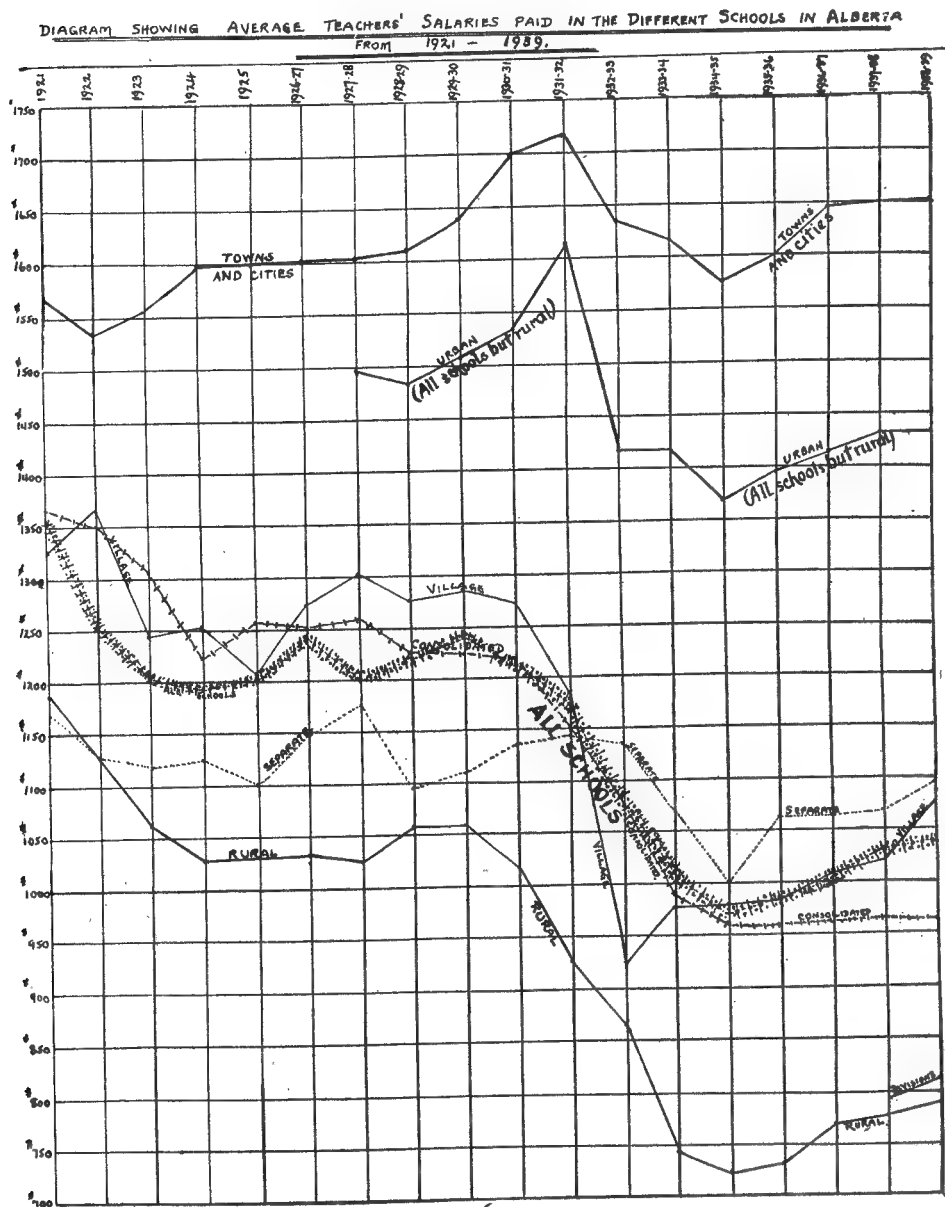


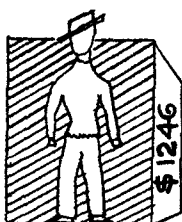
CHART No. 9

Chart No. 9 shows Alberta coming third out of nine Provinces in the amount spent on education per child. When one considers, according to the Toronto Saturday Night, July 11th, 1942, that the British Columbia Government, for instance, has been paying \$680.00 out of the \$780.00 minimum salary of rural teachers, it places Alberta in a favorable position remembering the proportion Alberta raises by direct taxation.

THE AVERAGE CANADIAN CHILD

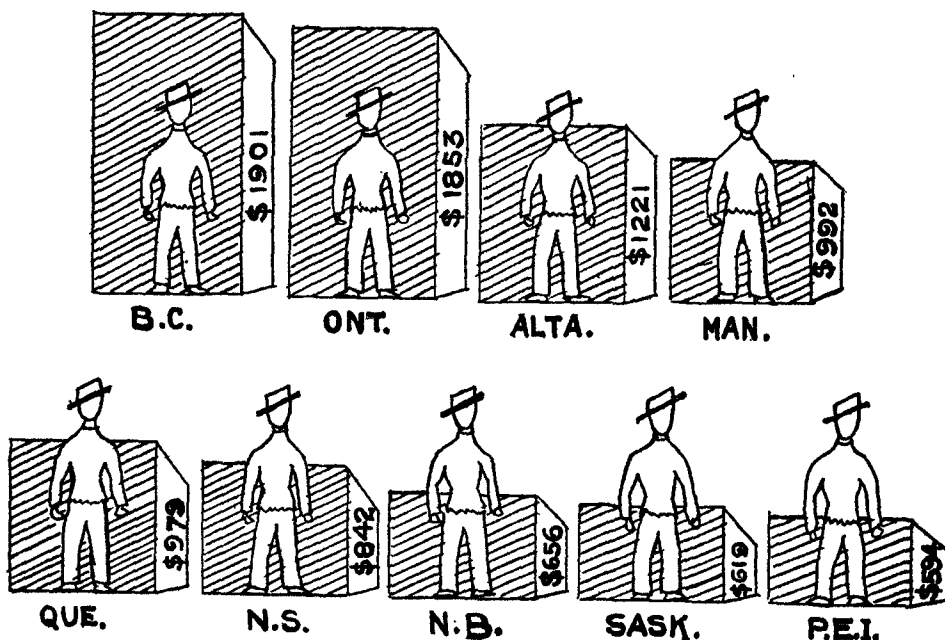
OF SCHOOL AGE - 6 to 15

IS BACKED BY



**\$1246 NET
PRODUCTION**

THESE ARE LUCKY, BUT THE AVERAGE



MEANS LITTLE IF YOU'RE ON THE SHORT END!

BASED ON 1938 STATISTICS
CANADA YEAR BOOK 1940.

Referring once again to "Elementary and Secondary Education in Canada," p. 63, we find that the average salary for teachers for 1940 by Provinces is as follows:

B.C.....	\$1,302.00
Ontario.....	1,034.00
Alberta.....	865.00
Manitoba.....	715.00
Nova Scotia.....	612.00
Saskatchewan.....	608.00
New Brunswick.....	541.00
Prince Edward Island.....	482.00

It should be remembered that Ontario and British Columbia are more highly urbanized than Alberta, which would explain in part, the higher average salary. Again Alberta places third when paying teachers.

It has been mentioned before that British Columbia, the one that comes first, receives a much greater grant from the Provincial Government than does Alberta. It will be remembered that Alberta comes sixth in the matter of Provincial Government grants, leaving a greater proportion to direct taxation. Considering this, Alberta has done exceedingly well in comparison, in payment of teachers' salaries.

The following figures are taken from "Elementary and Secondary Education in Canada" 1938-40.

Page 80 shows Alta. Govt. School Grant in 1926 as.....	\$1,137,638.00
The Grant in 1940 as.....	1,870,413.00

An increase of.....\$ 732,775.00

Taxation within school administration units, 1926.....	\$8,241,715.00
Taxation within school administration units, 1940.....	8,684,282.00

An increase of.....\$ 442,547.00

Debenture Indebtedness in 1926.....	\$10,704,634.00
Debenture Indebtedness in 1940.....	7,301,294.00

A decrease of.....\$3,403,340.00

Page 81 shows Teachers' Salaries in 1926.....	\$5,640,219.00
Page 81 shows Teachers' Salaries in 1940.....	6,492,184.00

An increase of.....\$ 851,965.00

Equipment and Repairs in 1926.....	\$2,188,336.00
Equipment and Repairs in 1940.....	2,443,452.00

An increase of.....\$ 255,116.00

The above figures taking the years 1926 to 1940 (the first and last years quoted by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics in this edition) show an increase in Government Grants of.....	\$ 732,775.00
Increase in Direct Taxation of.....	442,547.00
Increase in Teachers' Salaries of.....	851,965.00
Increase in Equipment and repairs.....	225,116.00
Decrease in Debentures owing of.....	3,403,340.00

The decrease in Debentures is because the Province is older and many debentures have become due, or because a compromise settlement has been accepted by the debenture holders. However, even with this lessened liability, the arrears of school taxes stand at \$3,779,069.00. Later figures from municipal sources will make this situation obvious.

MUNICIPAL

Report of the Deputy Minister for 1940

Referring to cities, the following statement is made: "Land assessments have decreased while all other assessments have increased." The same is true of the villages. Total municipal assessment shows a further reduction from 1939 figure by nearly \$19,000,000.00, chiefly on land values.

It might be as well to quote here from the evidence before the Alberta Tax Inquiry Board, pages 24 and 30.

"Western Stock Growers' Association"

Taxation on the Short Grass Plains:

Taxation charges **alone** amount approximately to 25% of the returns received for all ages of cattle at present prices. Among the recommendations are the following:

A rate of taxation that stockmen can afford to pay.

That taxes be levied according to the productive value of the land rather than according to fictitious values."

Canada & Northwestern Farm Company:

This company purchased in 1910 eighteen sections of land ranging from Skiff to Hardisty. Sold three section in M.D. of Coronation in 1930 and helped finance purchasers in the breaking of the land and purchase of seed. Due to crop failures in 1931 and 1932, caused by hail and drought, purchasers abandoned their farms, leaving company with heavy tax bills. Absolutely no sale for these lands.

Referring again to the annual Municipal Report, 1940, page 8, "**Loans**" Municipal and Hospital outstanding loans show reduction, while the School loans have increased \$100,000.00 and seed grain liens by over \$200,000.00.

Mill Rate: Out of 143 municipal districts, the mill rate was raised in 70 and lowered in only 15.

Page 9. In 1936, the total requisition of rural schools on municipalities was \$1,871,059.00.

In 1940, the requisition had increased to \$2,700,692.00. From page 109 of the report, it will be noticed there is a steady decrease in the number of farmers from 82,864 in 1936 to 76,542 in 1940. This is not surprising considering the economic conditions. Page 110 shows the arrears of municipal district taxes for 1940 from previous years as \$5,681,387.00 and that arrears by the end of the year had increased to \$6,044,686.00.

Page 115 gives the following indebtedness for municipal districts in 1940.

Seed Grain and Feed Relief due Prov. Govt.....	\$1,398,685.52
Unpaid Municipal Loans.....	227,082.79
Unpaid School Loans.....	631,528.68
Unpaid Hospital Loans.....	25,437.53

The above figures are given to show the difficulty of the municipal districts raising more money by direct taxation for school purposes.

To the above situation must be added the following:

- (1) A very large percentage of farmers have consolidated their taxes. This is not done from choice but from necessity to save their homes. With interest added twice a year the growth of the debt is most rapid and if the taxpayer omits to meet his consolidated obligation for even one year the owner faces his former dilemma with all the penalties added.
- (2) Recent figures obtained from the Department of Municipal Affairs show that the total amount of land that has reverted to the Municipal Districts in Alberta, owing to non-payment of taxes, at Dec. 31st, 1941, is some 32,300 parcels, assessed at approximately \$5,456,000.00.
- (3) The tax exemption of soldiers' home lands has created a serious problem. The approximate assessment of land exempted from taxation under the Soldier Relief Act is \$1,140,000.00. The reduction of these from the tax roll only increases the burden on the balance of the tax payers. In common fairness, this liability should be carried by the Federal Government.

OTHER THINGS TO BE CONSIDERED

- (1) Considerable criticism has been made for not spending more money on school libraries. The fact is that money is not available without a further direct tax on land.
- (2) Equipment and buildings often suffer for the same reason.
- (3) Educational grants have not expanded in proportion to Provincial government revenues.
- (4) Although new grants have been instituted for technical equipment in connection with household economics and shopwork courses, the Government pays only a portion of the cost. The balance has to come from an increased tax on land. The same is true with regard to Health Units, or any care the School Trustees give to the health of the children. The balance must be paid out of the homes or farms of our people.
- (5) A feature of the special government grants which is not in the public interest, is that the Minister himself controls such payments. This leaves him open (whether justified or not) to the charge of political pressure. These special grants should be administered by an independent board.
- (6) The half of one per cent teachers' superannuation added two years ago to all school boards' costs except that of divisions, has had to be passed on to the land by them or deducted from library or building expenditures.
- (7) A minimum foundation school programme should be made available for every child. To make such a programme financially practicable, while maintaining a minimum salary of \$840.00 per annum, it has been estimated that approximately \$775,000.00 increase in school grants would be needed.

PROFESSIONAL STATUS

Much has been said of the professional status of a school teacher and all who are interested in education rejoice that the calling is looked upon as a profession.

One does not however, step into a profession except through arduous study and experience. Consider some of the other professions for instance, before those interested are allowed a professional status.

- (1) A nurse must spend three years of intensive training following Grade 12.
- (2) A dentist takes 5 years University training following Grade 12.
- (3) A doctor takes 7 years University training and a year's rotating internship in a hospital.
- (4) A lawyer has 5 years University training and a year of articleship before being admitted to the Bar.
- (5) A chartered accountant has 5 years articleship and exacting examinations following Grade 12 before he is licensed as a chartered accountant.
- (6) A pharmacist has 2 years' apprenticeship and a minimum of two years at a University before being licensed to practice.

The A.S.T.A. therefore, feel that they are justified in asking that teachers should at least get their permanent certificates before they are entitled to claim full membership in their profession, and be in a position to demand a salary in line with their proved ability and responsibility.

It is well to remember that those in the other professions mentioned above have definite handicaps compared with those who are teaching. For instance: (1) Even when a start is made in city, town or village, the public do not have to employ them. (2) The individual must depend on his own initiative and ability to draw his clientel. (3) There is no security of position, or remuneration, as is given the teachers under present legislation.

The Chief Inspector of Schools stated in his annual report of 1940, page 57: "Salaries showed a marked upward trend." And, in 1941, page 62, he referred to the upward trend of teachers' salaries. One wonders, therefore, at the great agitation to increase salaries of Normal students.

SOME INEQUALITIES

There is no other profession in our social set-up which enjoys such a preferred position as teaching.

- (1) The membership is compulsory under the tightest closed-shop legislation.
- (2) The fee check-up is complete.
- (3) Fees are collected at the expense of School Boards or the Department of Education.
- (4) The pension fees are collected at the cost of others.
- (5) The teacher contract legislation is one-sided, in that they have an extra month to give notice of leaving to the Trustees, than the Trustees have in discontinuing the services of a teacher.

THE COST OF INSTRUCTION

Comparisons are often misleading with respect to budgetted items allocated to teachers' salaries and other expenses. Often-times the net amount paid teachers is looked upon as the total instructional cost. The fact is often overlooked of moneys paid out in (1) Correspondent courses; (2) Tuition fees to outside school

boards, and (3) Transportation of children from districts where schools are closed. In one division, such a calculation would raise the percentage of total budget devoted to instruction from slightly over 50% to 70%. Yet, it is the lower figure which is often given publicity.

When a division prepares its budget, it takes a total assessed value of all lands on the tax roll, plus property which can be assessed for school purposes in a division, and calls for so many mills to meet its liabilities, allowing for grants, fees, etc., which might be anticipated. The municipalities who do the collecting very often increase the mill rate to be sure of raising enough money to pay the school requisition.

THE ALBERTA TAXATION INQUIRY BOARD ON PROVINCIAL AND MUNICIPAL TAXATION

The present case for the School Trustees would not be complete without reference to the valuable work produced by the above Board in 1935.

SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS

CITY OF CALGARY:

Real Property:

- (a) Land is no longer evidence of ability to pay.
- (b) The land and improvement tax is in effect a capital levy on a diminishing asset.
- (c) In many cases annual taxes exceed rental returns.
- (d) Present system of taxation of real property discourages home ownership, industrial and manufacturing activity, and investment of capital.
- (e) Taxation of real property should as far as possible be restricted to payments made in return for benefits received.
- (f) The present system of taxation is destroying the basis upon which it is founded.

Education:

- (a) The complications arising from the presence of non-resident pupils in city schools would disappear if the Province assumed its proper function in the field of education.
- (b) At present the Provincial Government leaves the financing of education largely to the enforcement of a taxation system as antiquated as it is inadequate.

CITY OF EDMONTON:

Real Property:

Real property is immovable and forms a fixed and favorite target for taxation. It is in effect "a capital tax". When taxation is imposed thereon it is an accepted principle that "the value of the site is lowered by a capitalized value of the tax."

EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOL BOARD:

The financing of education is in a most precarious state.

As the cost of education is strictly chargeable to land (except that portion derived from government grants) it will be seen how excessive the burden must be on one type of property.

The taxpayers of the Cities of Edmonton and Calgary combined spend more money in elementary and secondary education than the Department's appropriation for education over the entire Province.

Recommendations of the Edmonton Public School Board:

- (1) The Board recommends that in keeping with constitutional responsibility, the Province to assume the entire responsibility for operating and financing of public schools, or,
- (2) The Province to appoint all teachers and assume responsibility for the payment of salaries in accordance with a Province-wide schedule, the local municipality being responsible for the balance of operation cost, or,
Let the Province make an all-round substantial increase in all its school grants, and make substantial subventions towards the erection of school buildings.

THE CITY OF MEDICINE HAT:

The education, health, relief and other social services are primarily obligations of the Province.

UNION OF ALBERTA MUNICIPALITIES:

Real Property:

The taxation of real property, particularly in the large urban centres, has reached a stage of confiscation.

RURAL SCHOOL FINANCE:

Financing of Schools:

Due to the varying tax-paying power of rural districts and the widespread in mill rates found necessary to obtain the required funds, educational authorities have reached the conclusion that the present system of financing rural schools is gravely defective and **must be abandoned**. When it is realized that the assessment of property in school districts varies from \$3,175.00 to \$550,000.00, and that the tax rates for school purposes vary from two mills to sixty-three mills, little argument is necessary to prove the defective character of the system now in vogue.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

As to Municipal Taxation:

In order to shorten this brief, only the three following recommendations are mentioned:

- (1) That the burden of taxation imposed upon land has become excessive, inequitable and confiscatory in character.
- (2) That in respect to the problems of school finance, the need of greater centralization, both as to administration and finance, is evident, and that the power vested in School Boards enabling them to demand from Municipal Councils the full amount of their annual requirements, without

due regard to the financial exigencies of the municipality affected, is in principal unsound.

- (3) That in view of the fact that technical education bears a close relation to the trade and commerce of the country as a whole, a large proportion of the cost of this type of education should be borne by the Dominion Government.

SUMMARY

The foregoing synopsis of some of the problems of the Alberta School Trustees' Association, stressing its financial difficulties has covered a wide field.

The inadequacy of direct taxation, such being the larger source of income, is particularly stressed, and at present Alberta is in that unfortunate position of having to rely on that for a very large percentage of its educational funds. Statistics show that the Province is rated sixth in the listing of amounts paid by Provincial Governments. At the same time the teachers' salaries come third in the listing. Federal assistance is entirely lacking as a direct grant, although it may be noted that the Province has received educational grants in some form. It may be gathered from this that it realizes the need and its obligation.

Stress has also been laid on the financial condition of agriculture. The reason for this being that this is largely an agricultural Province. Its welfare vitally affects conditions both directly and indirectly.

After reading the pamphlet, it can readily be understood why the Alberta School Trustees' Association passed the following resolution unanimously at their Annual Convention in January, 1942.

"WHEREAS it is essential to the building up of a well qualified and capable teaching profession in the Province that teachers should be paid adequate salaries;

AND WHEREAS, as a result of provincial legislation necessitating the establishment of salary schedules, many new demands have been made on Schools Boards for increased salaries;

AND WHEREAS, as a result of changes in the curriculum still further current and capital demands have been made on School Boards;

AND WHEREAS the principal source of revenue of School Boards to meet the above increased costs is largely limited to increasing taxation on the farm lands and homes of the citizens of the Province, despite the fact that it is conceded the same are already greatly over-taxed;

AND WHEREAS the Provincial Government has a much broader basis of taxation and numerous sources from which to draw revenue, and such revenue has substantially increased within recent years, and education has not shared either adequately or equitably in such increased revenue;

AND WHEREAS this Convention is convinced that no further taxation can be added against farm lands and homes for the purpose of increasing teachers' salaries or for any other educational purposes;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

- (1) That this Convention is agreed that no further increases in school taxes on land and improvements thereon are practicable, or should be made.

(2) That no further increases in the Budgets of School Boards should be made hereafter, except to the extent that increases in provincial grants make the same possible.

(3) That the Government of Alberta be requested to take immediate steps to increase school grants to ameliorate the already serious situation existing in respect to over-taxation of farm lands and homes for school purposes, and also to make it possible for Boards to meet demands for increased teachers' salaries and other educational costs."

CONCLUSION

When the Alberta Government accedes to the request of the A.S.T.A. with respect to paying a greater part of the educational costs, and the Federal Government brings to the Province much needed similar aid; the local burden of taxation will be within reason and therefore easier to bear.

When that day comes, the Trustees, the teachers and the ratepayers should be able to work more amicably together for better and more worthwhile educational conditions, which we all desire.

APPENDIX

Since this brief was written further information has come to hand from municipal sources. It is therefore added as an appendix.

In spite of business improvement we find that Lethbridge reports 110 parcels of land have been offered at tax sales during the past three years. Calgary reports taking title to 720 parcels of land in the years, 1939-41. While Edmonton took title to 886 parcels of land during the same years.

The above supports the statement of the Alberta Taxation Enquiry Board on Provincial and Municipal taxation, when they said "That the burden of taxation imposed upon land had become excessive, inequitable and confiscatory in character." This is fully borne out by a search of the records of the Department of Municipal Affairs in 1938. This search showed the following extraordinary facts. Of 107,374 parcels of land in the 52 towns of the Province no less than 83,360 had become finally forfeited and an additional 5,772 were in various stages of tax recovery leading to forfeiture.

The above figures should be sufficient to show that increased direct taxation on land is not in the best interests of the people of the Province and that the claim of the Alberta School Trustees' Association for Provincial and Federal aid in support of education is more than justified.

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